



March 13, 2015

## Essential virtual training for the warfighter

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**NAVAL AIR SYSTEM COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, MD** – Who would have guessed gaming with friends after school, could one day be transferred into real world lifesaving experiences. Today, virtual training is used to teach members of the U.S. armed forces how to react to anticipated threats.

Representatives from the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy training communities met at [Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division](#) (NAWCAD), Patuxent River, Maryland, to discuss and exchange ideas about how the Next Generation Threat System ([NGTS](#)) improves the warfighter's training experience. These operators learned about the newest features in the latest version of the software, NGTS V3.1, released January 2015. Some of these new features were high-fidelity surface and subsurface simulations, auto-generated maritime and urban traffic, as well as advanced threat behavior modeling tools.

"NGTS can accurately simulate the complexity of modern warfare to allow pilots to train in an intense environment, which can be much more difficult and expensive to do with live training," said John DiCola, NGTS program manager. "NGTS also integrates with existing trainers to allow students to train in a wide variety of environments."

The NGTS system can be programmed to mimic various platforms working in unison, such as a ship and aircraft working together to complete a routine mission.

"NGTS is basically a constructive simulation system that allows you, as a user, to either build or make models as accurate as you can," said Kristy Molinar, NGTS lead with Distributed Mission Operation Center (DMOC) at Kirtland, Air Force Base, New Mexico. "For instance an aircraft, must imitate a real life aircraft flying out there in the world."

An instructor using the system can manage and assess a student's performance to provide them immediate feedback. "For the brand new student sitting in the simulator, it's giving him the best idea of what he's really going up against and giving him the most accurate representation of the threats he's going to encounter," said Lt. Cmdr. Brian "Barney" Miller, Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems (NAWCTSD) at Orlando, Florida. "I think one of those lessons we keep learning over and over again is the student that's in training is going to be in combat sooner than he thought he would be. So, whatever we can give him now that's the best training possible is always going to be to his benefit."